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FILED
U.S. BANKRUPTCY COURT

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ASSOCIATION
FOR BEHAVIORAL
HEALTHCARE

October 1, 2019

Honorable Robert Drain
United States Bankruptcy Judge
United States Bankruptcy Court
Southern District of New York
300 Quarropas Street
White Plains, New York 10601-4140

Re: *In re Purdue Pharma L.P., et al*, Case No. 19-23649 (RDD)

Dear Judge Drain:

I am writing in support of Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healey and the 24 other attorneys general across the country who are opposing Purdue Pharma's proposed settlement and request for a nationwide injunction.

The Association for Behavioral Healthcare (ABH) is a statewide association representing more than eighty community-based mental health and addiction treatment provider organizations. Our members are the primary providers of publicly-funded behavioral healthcare services in the Commonwealth, serving approximately 81,000 Massachusetts residents daily, 1.5 million residents annually, and employing over 46,500 people.

ABH opposes Purdue Pharma's proposed settlement and request for a nationwide injunction as it would stop all lawsuits against the company and the Sackler family. It is not in the public interest for the court to stop all cases as the public deserves to understand what Purdue and the Sacklers knew and the extent of their involvement in deceptive marketing strategies of the company. Bankruptcy should not be used to shield more information from being made public.

Massachusetts has faced the addiction opioid crisis over the last ten years. ABH providers have shifted their practices to better address the needs of this population, but the need for more treatment and prevention services continues. Data collected by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) shows that the overdose deaths in Massachusetts increased from approximately 550 in 2010 to 2,056 in 2017.¹ In a single-day count on March 31, 2017, 58,280 people in Massachusetts were enrolled in substance use treatment – an increase from 44,033 people in 2013.²

¹ <https://www.mass.gov/lists/current-opioid-statistics>

² Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Behavioral Health Barometer: Massachusetts, Volume 5: Indicators as measured through the 2017 National Survey on Drug Use and Health and the National Survey of Substance Abuse Treatment Services. HHS Publication No. SMA-19-Baro-17-MA. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2019.

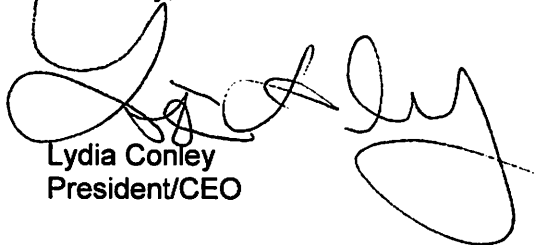
ABH providers are on the front lines, serving individuals and families who are desperate to access treatment services. The individuals our members serve are younger and at higher risk, and they suffer from more chronic conditions than they had in the past. Providers report the tremendous personal losses they have witnessed on the front line of the epidemic. It has destroyed individuals, families and their communities, left kids without one or both parents, has required grandparents to accept responsibility for their grandchildren or end up in foster care and the loss of their homes, livelihoods and life savings. Providers have seen the increase in rates of addiction to opioids in our programs.

The state has invested millions of dollars in funding to expand programs at the Bureau of Substance Addiction Services at the Department of Public Health (BSAS – DPH). The budget for this division alone increased from \$83 million in FY2012 to \$164 million in FY2020 and that does not take into account the money spent in law enforcement, the judiciary, child welfare and public health insurance (Medicaid and Medicare).

Massachusetts, like many states, is facing an addiction treatment workforce crisis. As the state continues to invest in the system, ABH members simply cannot hire the amount of qualified staff they need to open new programs. More investment is needed simply to serve those who need access to treatment.

We respectfully request your consideration of these factors and oppose the proposed settlement and nationwide injunction.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lydia Conley', is written over the printed name and title. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Lydia Conley
President/CEO